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Africa Review

12 January 1979

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247

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AFRICA REVIEW (U)

12 January 1979

CONTENTS

Rhodesia: Prime Minister Smith's Plans (U) 1

Prime Minister Ian Smith told a close
adviser this week that he does not in-
tend to stand for reelection on 20 April,
but that he will stay on as Prime Minister
until a new government is formed and a
black is appointed to his post. [REDACTED] 25X1C
[REDACTED] (S NF
NC OC)

Namibia: UN Representative's Visit (U) 3

Martti Ahtisaari, the UN Secretary General's
special representative for Namibia, will
visit the territory next week to discuss
with the South African Administrator General
the problems blocking implementation of
the UN independence program. (C)

Nigeria: Economic and Social Tensions (U). 5

Tensions in Nigeria have risen appreciably
over the past year in response to mounting
popular frustration over worsening economic
and social conditions. (C)

Cape Verde: Soviet Presence (S). 7

President Pereira seems determined to
preserve his country's nonaligned stance,
despite a rise since last spring in the
number of Soviet military and civilian
advisers on the islands. (S)

FOR THE RECORD (U). 12

25X1A

Rhodesia: Prime Minister Smith's Plans (U)

Prime Minister Ian Smith told [REDACTED] that he does not intend to stand for re-election on 20 April, but that he will stay on as Prime Minister until a new government is formed and a black is appointed to his post, [REDACTED]

* Smith reportedly is reluctant to step down before then because he fears the party might choose Co-minister for Foreign Affairs Pieter Van Der Byl, to replace him. (S NF NC OC)

Van Der Byl has close ties among rightwing whites, many of whom would like to scuttle the internal settlement. Smith would prefer to have Deputy Prime Minister David Smith succeed him if he stepped down before elections, but his replacement is elected by the party caucus, which Smith fears would favor a hardliner such as Van Der Byl. David Smith has long recognized the need for a political settlement of the Rhodesian problem. Although the Deputy Prime Minister has consistently supported the Prime Minister's settlement plans, he believes [REDACTED]

(S NF NC OC)

Smith has often stated his willingness to retire from public life if a settlement seemed assured. Although his departure has long been a primary objective of the black nationalists, it would not contribute much to the resolution of the more basic problems of ending the war, stemming white flight, or obtaining international recognition. (S)

*The Rhodesian constitution, published on 2 January, calls on the president--who is elected by both houses of parliament--to appoint as prime minister the person he "considers best able to command the support of the majority of the members of the lower house." Seventy-two of the 100 seats in the lower house are reserved for blacks and Bishop Abel Muzorewa, black cochairman of the Executive Council, is expected to win over half of the black votes and be named as the new prime minister. (U)

12 January 1979

SECRET

Smith is not likely to publicly announce any decision to step down in the near future for fear of losing white confidence in the transitional government. He could change his mind anytime between now and the elections scheduled for April if the security situation deteriorates further or he believes that remaining in office is necessary to bolster the whites' commitment to the new government. (S) (SECRET NOFORN-NOCONTRACT-ORCON)

12 January 1979

SECRET

SECRET

25X1A

Namibia: UN Representative's Visit (U)

Martti Ahtisaari, the UN Secretary General's special representative for Namibia, will visit the territory next week to discuss with the South African Administrator General the problems blocking implementation of the UN independence program. Ahtisaari's mission will test whether South Africa, in order to gain international support for a Namibian Government, will drop demands for modifications in the UN program that probably would be unacceptable to the Security Council. (C)

South African Prime Minister Botha has agreed in principle to a UN-supervised election in Namibia that would, in effect, nullify the election conducted by the South Africans last month. Meanwhile, however, he apparently intends to use the newly elected constituent assembly to show Namibian sympathy for Pretoria's hard bargaining with the UN. When Botha concluded his first meeting with the Namibian Assembly in late December, he said that the assembly would again be consulted before the South African Government makes a final decision to accept a UN transitional assistance group in Namibia. (C)

There is still a wide gap between stipulations in the UN transitional program that the Security Council adopted last September and various conditions that South African leaders have subsequently stated. The UN plan stipulates that South African and SWAPO forces withdraw simultaneously within three months of a truce, and that an election be held four months after both sides fully comply with truce arrangements. In late December, however, Prime Minister Botha informed Secretary General Waldheim that no South African troops would be withdrawn until it is clear that SWAPO has ceased all guerrilla operations, but South Africa requires an early agreement with the UN to hold an election no later than 30 September 1979. (C)

12 January 1979

3
SECRET

SECRET

Moreover, Botha has indicated to Waldheim that he will insist on modifications in the UN plan for a peace-keeping force in Namibia. The plan authorizes an overall strength of 7,500 for the UN military force and stipulates that national contingents will be selected so as to have equitable geographic representation. Although Waldheim has said that the actual strength may be well below 7,500, depending on circumstances, Botha has implied publicly that he will insist on prior agreement to a much smaller force. He has also implied that South Africa will not accept troops from any Communist country. (C)

Waldheim's decision to send Ahtisaari to Namibia with instructions to challenge Botha to accept quickly at least the first arrivals of a UN military force on the premise that remaining problems will be resolved jointly by Ahtisaari and Administrator General Steyn as the operation proceeds. Waldheim has informed Botha that placement of a UN force in Namibia must begin by late February if Botha's goal of an election by September is to be reconciled with the UN plan. (C)

If Botha agrees to the early arrival of a first group of UN troops without nailing down his conditions, he will still hold high cards. All the Namibian political groups except SWAPO share his wariness of UN "partiality" for SWAPO, and may back the South Africans in continuing efforts to limit the actual deployments of UN troops and the activities of the UN civilian staff. The plan for phased replacements of South African troops with a UN force will provide opportunities for foot-dragging if the South Africans perceive threats to their basic interests in Namibia. (C) (CONFIDENTIAL)

12 January 1979

4
SECRET

25X1A



Nigeria: Economic and Social Tensions (U)

Tensions in Nigeria have risen appreciably over the past year in response to mounting popular frustration over worsening economic and social conditions. These strains, when coupled with deep-seated tribal, regional, and religious differences, add to a marked propensity for impatience and violence that underlies relations among individual Nigerians. The impact on internal politics of rising economic and social unrest will be of growing importance in 1979, as Nigeria attempts an already difficult transition to civilian rule scheduled for next October. Such unrest could disrupt progress toward constitutional rule, which is already being threatened by a resurgence of ethnic politics. Economic and social demands will also pose a serious challenge for the government, be it civilian or, more likely, military, that governs Nigeria in coming years. (C)

Student and urban unrest, which flared last spring before burning out by early June, revealed a serious level of economic and social discontent in Nigeria that could erupt into street violence with relatively little provocation. Malaise is highest among students, low income workers, urban dwellers, and middle class professionals. (C)

Nigeria's oil boom of the early 1970s has increased popular expectations that poor living conditions and underemployment will be substantially alleviated. Unfortunately, the short-lived boom has brought the inevitable problems common to several other OPEC countries: rapid population growth, accelerated urbanization, sharp inflation, chaotic and uneven economic development, shortages of consumer goods and housing, inadequate public services, and wider disparities between the privileged few and the masses. Nigerians, whose per capita income averages around \$400 a year, find it difficult

12 January 1979

SECRET

to accept that Nigeria's oil boom is now over* and that the country must learn to get along on reduced means. They are resentful of the personal sacrifices required of them by the Obasanjo government's program of economic austerity and retrenchment that is to see Nigeria to civilian rule. (C)

Economic and social conditions are likely to be major political issues through this year and probably the next several years. Nigeria's civilian presidential contenders have responded to popular concerns with a heavy focus on economic and social issues in their party platforms. They all espouse similar populist goals and differ mainly on how swiftly the government should try to achieve them. Aspiring politicians so far have muffled direct criticism of the military's management of the economy to avoid provoking punitive measures against themselves and jeopardizing the process of returning to civilian rule. Even if a civilian government were installed, however, it is doubtful that it would prove any more successful than Nigeria's military rulers in coping with the rising tide of economic and social demands or in demonstrating quick results. (C)

The more the organized work force--some 880,000 to 1 million unionists faced with continued wage controls--is exposed to campaign rhetoric about increasing the popular share of economic prosperity, the more likely Nigeria's restive workers will be to express their resentment via wildcat strikes and antimanagement riots. While the military has forcibly kept labor unrest under control, a future civilian government--being more vulnerable to popular pressures--might be less inclined to intervene or to resist extreme labor demands. (C)
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*Oil output is expected to peak by 1980 and decline after the mid-1980s, unless the government can soon provide investment incentives for exploitation of untapped deep-water areas. (C)

12 January 1979

SECRET

SECRET

25X1A

Cape Verde: Soviet Presence (S)

President Aristides Pereira, the moderate leader of the strategically located Cape Verde Islands, seems determined to preserve his country's nonaligned stance, despite a rise since last spring in the number of Soviet military and civilian advisers on the islands. The increased Soviet presence, a result of Cape Verde's decision to develop its own military establishment, is unlikely, at least for the short term, to undermine Pereira's position or lead to Soviet military access to Cape Verdean facilities. Pereira could eventually be challenged, however, by his more radical and pro-Soviet Defense Minister Silvino da Luz, who is reportedly being cultivated by the Soviets and whose important position in the growing military establishment could give him leverage to influence future events. (S)

Soviet Involvement

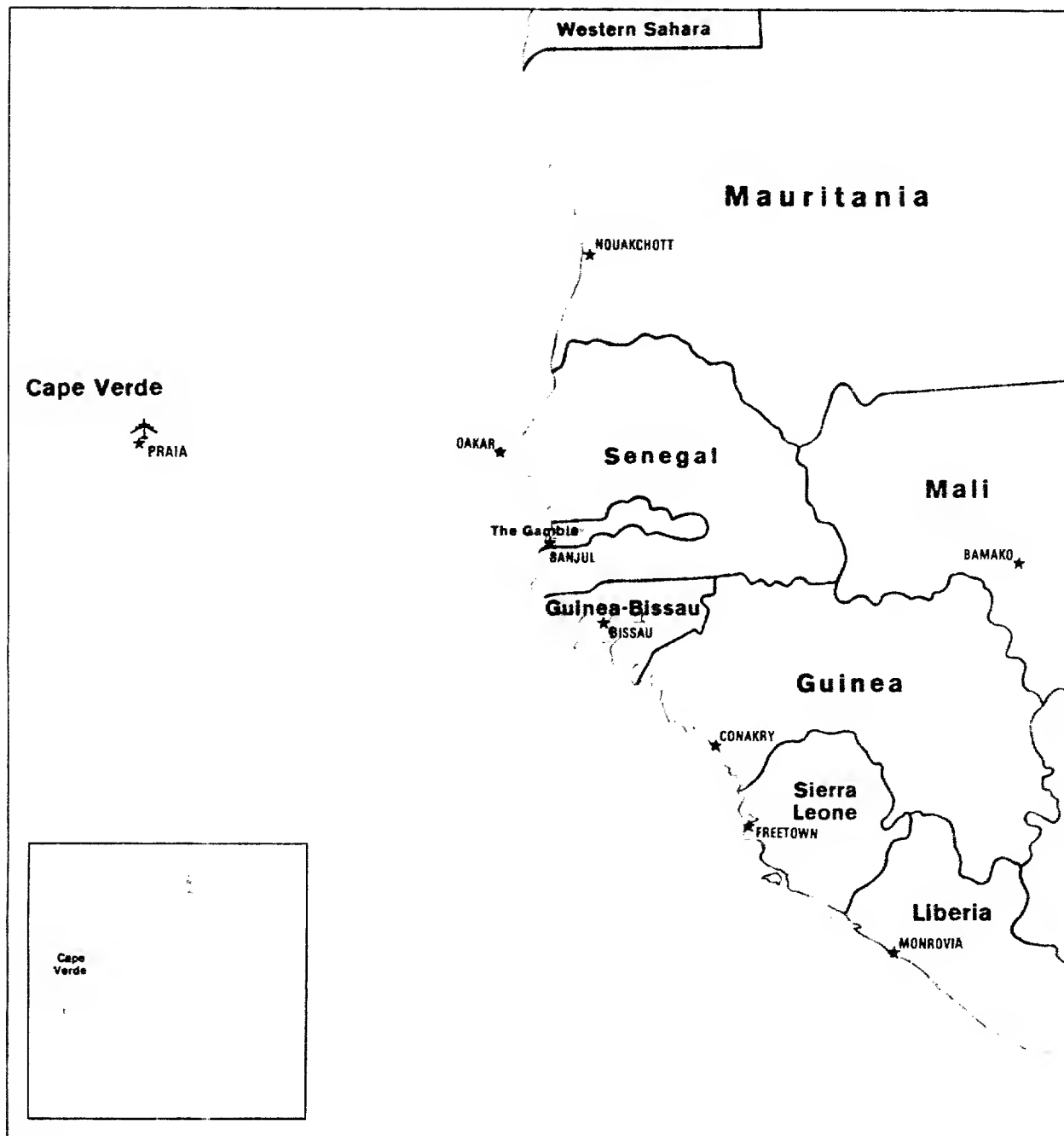
The Soviets have pursued a long-term campaign aimed at increasing their influence and presence in Cape Verde. The Soviet Union was the principal benefactor to the struggle of Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau for independence from Portugal. Moscow continued to support Cape Verde after independence in 1975. Soviet interest in the islands--astride the north-south Atlantic air and shipping lanes--is related to its search for alternative and additional facilities to support its commercial and military operations in Africa. (S)

Moscow is interested in obtaining military access to naval and air facilities in Cape Verde because of its need to support its involvement in the Horn of Africa and because of Guinean President Toure's decision in mid-1977 to terminate Soviet use of Conakry airport for TU-95 naval reconnaissance aircraft flights. The Soviets may also be anticipating that Toure will terminate in coming months a Soviet-Guinean accord that has permitted a small Soviet West African naval patrol to operate off Conakry since the early 1970s. (S)

12 January 1979

SECRET

SECRET



12-20-8 9 78

12 January 1979

SECRET

SECRET

The Soviets have requested authorization to use the island's main airfield for military aircraft and reconnaissance flights, but Pereira, who frequently says that he will not permit foreign military use of Cape Verde, has apparently turned them down. Pereira's protestations have not, however, prevented him from allowing Cuba to use the main airfield. While Pereira claims that Cuban flights carry civilians, they also shuttle Cuban military personnel back and forth to Angola and other African countries. (S)

Soviet access to port facilities at Mendelo, on Sao Vicente, would enhance their naval operations in the Atlantic and along the West African littorals. Mendelo has an excellent harbor and is ideal for resupplying ships. It is also a center for international transportation--international shipping companies make regular stops at Mendelo--in addition to having a submarine cable station that links Cape Verde with Europe. (S)

In the past year, the Soviets made three military deliveries to the islands, including several tons of rifles, ammunition, grenades, portable rocket launchers, SA-7 surface-to-air missiles, and communication equipment. Pereira also agreed to accept a Soviet offer of three MIG-17 fighters--which will be transferred from Guinea-Bissau--after Moscow backed down on a demand that Soviet pilots fly the aircraft and agreed to train Cape Verdean pilots. (S)

The Soviets, who have extended only limited amounts of economic aid to the islands, are presently providing military training to about 200 Cape Verdeans. There are also about 300 Cape Verdean students studying in the Soviet Union, although the number will probably dwindle with the beginning of generous scholarship programs offered by France, Brazil, and Portugal. (S)

Pereira's Request

Pereira turned to Moscow last year for additional military equipment and advisers to create Cape Verde's

12 January 1979

SECRET

own military establishment.* Moscow responded enthusiastically to Pereira's request and took the opportunity to increase its presence in Cape Verde from approximately 25 to 60 military and civilian personnel. The Soviets are also active in other areas such as security, airport management, and health. (S)

In an attempt to capitalize on its expanded presence, Moscow last month invited Defense Minister da Luz to visit the Soviet Union. Da Luz is openly pro-Soviet and pro-Cuban and claims to have arranged for Cuban technical assistance to Cape Verde, in addition to obtaining the services of Soviet military and police advisers. Although da Luz received government approval to make the trip, the invitation stirred a heated debate among more moderate government officials who question Moscow's motives. (S)

Internal Situation

President Pereira--who has ruled Cape Verde since independence in July 1975 and heads the island's sole political party, the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde (PAIGC)--has no serious political challengers at the moment and seems to be in full control of his country. He is highly respected and admired by the people for the role he played in the liberation struggle against Portugal. (S)

As long as Pereira remains in power, Cape Verde will probably continue to follow a nonaligned course and resist Soviet overtures. Pereira is suspicious of Moscow's intentions, especially its cultivation of da Luz, and has attempted to play down the significance of the Soviet presence in Cape Verde. The President also recognizes that his country is heavily dependent on Western assistance for economic development, and to ensure continued Western support, Pereira probably intends to set further limits on the Soviets. (S)

*Cape Verde and Guinea-Bissau formed a single liberation army in 1961 in their independence struggle against Portugal. Both countries, which share the same political party, continued to rely on this force, stationed in Guinea-Bissau, after independence in anticipation of unifying the two states. With both countries showing little interest in unification in recent years, Pereira apparently felt that Cape Verde was in need of its own military force. (S)

12 January 1979

Pereira, however, who is troubled by poor health, is being criticized by several disgruntled party and government officials for his failure to come to grips with the islands' perilous economic condition. While Pereira is not in any immediate danger, the military's increasing influence could dim Cape Verde's long-term prospects for political stability. (S)

Da Luz, who is in control of Cape Verde's security apparatus and whose political influence will continue to grow along with the size of the military, will probably try to use the Soviet presence to enhance his own political position. The Soviets will use their increased presence to gain further influence with da Luz, who probably wants to become president. If da Luz gained power, he would probably nationalize private and foreign businesses, opt for a policy of land collectivism, suppress the Catholic church, and initiate an anti-Western foreign policy that could easily include granting military access rights to the Soviet Union. (S)

If da Luz attempted to press his advantage, he would probably be challenged by Prime Minister Pires, who could be a contender for the presidency himself when Pereira leaves the scene. Pires, who supports Pereira, would probably maintain and reinforce Cape Verde's nonaligned position, expand its economic ties with Western nations, introduce mixed economic programs, and try to improve relations with Cape Verde's sizable immigrant communities in the United States, Senegal, and other countries. (S) (SECRET)

12 January 1979

FOR THE RECORD (U)

DJIBOUTI-CHINA: China and Djibouti earlier this week established diplomatic relations and agreed to exchange ambassadors as quickly as possible. For the Djibouti Government, the decision clearly reflects an effort to balance the diplomatic presence recently established by the Soviets. Djibouti President Gouled, who only reluctantly acceded to strong and persistent pressure from Moscow for diplomatic ties, remains highly suspicious that the Soviets will undermine his fragile and ethnically troubled regime as well as that of neighboring Somalia while attempting to pave the way for increased Ethiopian influence in Djibouti. Peking has the same concerns and will attempt to use Gouled's worries to advance its own anti-Soviet policies in the Horn of Africa. (CONFIDENTIAL) [REDACTED]

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GHANA: The announcement by the International Monetary Fund this week of a \$69 million loan to Ghana is an important boost for the battered Ghanaian economy. Since its takeover in a bloodless coup last July, the Akuffo regime has initiated a series of currency devaluations along with a sharp cutback in government spending in an attempt to curb the country's soaring inflation rate and chronic balance-of-payments deficit. The IMF loan should ease the way for additional foreign loans and temporarily alleviate pressure on the regime for more unpopular austerity measures. (U)

Even with this infusion of funds, Ghana is still far from solving the basic problems contributing to its economic plight--mismanagement, excessive public spending, corruption, and a stagnant agricultural sector. Moreover, if the government's plans for a return to civilian rule next July are carried out, a new--and probably more insecure--civilian regime may prove less able to adhere to the austerity program that is necessary for longer term economic and political stability. (C) (CONFIDENTIAL) [REDACTED]

25X1A

12 January 1979

Secret

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